



Spark Gap

Vol. 35, Issue 5, May 2018 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for thirty-five years*

ON OUR MARC:

May starts a summer of activities. We have the Dayton Hamfest in May, the Strawberry Fest and Field day in June. Strawberry Fest is just a few weeks away. After Strawberry Fest, we are trying another event Kids Day which will be June 16th starting about 1:00 pm. This will be held down at the radio room. After Kids Day, we have Field Day. June will be a busy month for us.

I would like to take this time to thank Marlys Barr for handling our finances for the last few years. If you did not attend the April meeting, Marlys resigned as the club's treasurer. The officers have decided not to have anyone replace her at this time and wait until elections to replace our treasurer. No speaker for this month since most people will be at Dayton. Hope everyone that will be attending Dayton has a great time.

If you are not going to Dayton, hope to see you at the meeting on Saturday.

Jackie, KI6QOG

President



Birthdays for the month of May:

***KC9GCH-Linda Harshbarger
N9AWM-Andrew Murrey
KU9V-Anthony Stokes
K9NTZ-Kevin Nuetzman
KA9QBF-Joseph Lovrini
KC9ZTM-Thomas Genera***



Bob Jones - KB9NJM

Jones Severe Weather Talk

As we enter another spring summer severe season it is important to know what to watch for when storms sweep across Indiana. Learning to recognize clouds and potential threats was the subject of our April meeting. Bob Jones-KB9NJM is an avid Skywarn spotter. He recently attended the daylong conference sponsored by the National Weather Service. Bob passed this information on to MARC members during a 30 minute presentation in April. When severe weather is predicted, monitor the MARC repeater at 146.835 pl151.4. Remember, anyone can call up a net when NWS activates Johnson county.

..... Jack W8ISH

Central Indiana Skywarn Net linked repeater system

Indianapolis

146.970MHz -600kHz pl 77.0 W9ICE
442.650MHz +5MHz pl 77.0 W9ICE

Frankfort

147.045MHz +600kHz pl 173.8 N9KYB
Freetown (near Seymour)
147.435MHz simplex pl 77.0 W9ICE

Lafayette

443.775MHz +5MHz pl 88.5 KA9VXS

Russiaville (near Kokomo)

442.525 +5MHz pl 131.8 N9KYB





W9IMS Op: Jay W9TC

W9IMS Ops:

David W9AT, Jim K9RJ, Mike W9IS, Ricardo W9IH, De W9IS, David W9TC, Bill W9YI, Steve W9IS, Sean W9AV, Paul W9KQK, Jay W9TC, Greg K9TL, Steve K9WQD, Tom K9KV, Dicky W9LTP, Ivan W9LF, Matt W9CKX, Steve W9OC, Jay K9LAV, Gavrik W9YE, Brian W9LQ, Steve W9QVO & Clark K9T

Indy 500 Race Fans

Photos: Indianapolis Motor Speedway and W9IMS



Indy 500 Race Fans

Dario Franchitti Wins His Third Indianapolis 500

W9IMS QSOs with:

DATE	UTC	MHz	RST	Mode
May 2012				
May 2012				
May 2012				

Confirmed by & Comments _____ 73 CU NX YR

W9IMS

Working the Big Guns on HF is something you don't do easily living in a code restricted HOA condo. Downsizing to a condo in 2006 crushed my ability to operate HF. Since the fall of 2007 I have taken my radios and antennas on the road to experience the world of national and international ham radio contacts. Since joining the W9IMS special event group last year the thrill of operating from a first class station has become a reality. W9IMS is the official ham radio club for the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. It includes several MARC members as well. For the past fourteen years they have operated for weeks at a time, 24/7, to provide Amateur Radio operators worldwide a chance to reach out and contact the greatest spectacle in racing. Using remote transmitters and first class antenna systems a W9IMS ham can operate on 20, 40 or 80 meters from the comfort of their home.

For me, it's great to use VOX with my headset and know that when I call CQ, Whiskey Nine, Mike, India, Sierra, my signal is transmitted at 800 watts from a high gain antenna. W9IMS frequently gets five-nine reports from calling stations that say, "you are seven over nine here on the west coast". Now that is a great Amateur Radio experience. All contacts are rewarded with a specially designed QSL card for each race and a certificate if they contact all three Special Event Stations this year. Last week, the IndyCar Grand Prix was the first race and radio event for the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Early reports indicate W9IMS logged over 5000 QSO's in the week prior to the race. Stay tuned for the Indy 500 Special Event Station next week. Check-ins begin May 21st. They hope to hear from you.

..... Jack W8ISH



“Alexa, help me with ham radio”

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

I have had an [Amazon Alexa](#) for nearly a year now. Mostly, I just use it to listen to internet radio stations or tell me a joke, but I think it has more potential than that. For example, I've written before about how [I'd like to develop an Alexa skill](#) to control my IC-7300. I haven't gotten around to that yet, but, Joe, N3HEE, has just published an Alexa skill called [Continuous Wave](#). It's designed to help you learn Morse Code.

To use this skill, you have to first enable it. Once enabled, say, “Alexa, open Continuous Wave.” This opens the skill at the main menu. You can then say any of the following at any voice prompt...

- Learn
- Practice
- Alphabet
- Common words
- Random words
- Words
- Sentences
- Call signs
- Contest
- Quick Brown Fox
- QSO
- Help
- Stop – To end your session.

I've just played around with this app for a short time, but I've found it to be quite entertaining. It does, however, have one big drawback. You can't set the speed. It's currently limited to sending at 20 words per minute only.

Also, the learn function could use a little refining. When you give the command “learn,” it asks you for a character, sends that character three times, and then asks you for another. If you could set the speed at which the skill sends characters, it could teach a character like the K7QO Code Course, first sending the character slowly, then ramping up the speed.

Overall, though, I think this is a great first shot at a usable Alexa skill for teaching Morse Code. I hope this is the first of many versions of this skill.

Other ham radio skills

While I was poking around on Amazon, I decided to see what other amateur radio skills might be available. Here are a few that I found:

- [Ham Exam](#). Ask Alexa to ask you questions from the Technician Class question pool.
- [Ham Lookup](#). Allows you to look up amateurs by call sign. Information is provided from the callbook.info database.
- [Ham Radio Propagation Forecast](#). Reports the latest forecasts directly from HamQSL (run by N0NBH).

- [ARRL Audio News](#). Adds ARRL Audio News to your Alexa flash briefing.

Building your own voice app

The Continuous Wave Alexa skill was developed using tools found at [VoiceApps.Com](#). Two other websites—[Pullstring](#) and [StoryLine](#)—also have tools to help you build voice apps. And, Amazon has an [online tutorial](#) that will teach you how to build an Alexa app. I'm just getting started with these tools, so I can't recommend one over the others, but they do look like they'll make developing voice apps easier.

Since I'm currently in the process of updating my [No Nonsense Technician Class License Study Guide](#), it occurs to me that I should also develop an Alexa skill for drilling students on test questions. I guess you could call them audio flashcards. Stay tuned for that.

When he's not trying to figure out how to build voice apps, Dan blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com, teaches ham radio classes, and operates CW on the HF bands. Look for him on 30m, 40m, and 80m. You can email him about the voice apps that you like at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

Amateur Radio Parity Act Language Inserted in National Defense Authorization Act

ARRL has praised the work of US Representatives Joe Courtney (D-CT[2]), Vicky Hartzler (R-MO[4]), and Mike Rogers (R-AL[3]) for their successful efforts in securing language in the FY 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that asks the FCC to grant radio amateurs living in restricted communities the right to install effective outdoor antennas. Text from the proposed Amateur Radio Parity Act (HR 555) formed the basis for the Courtney-Hartzler-Rogers Amendment to the NDAA.

“The bill *does* entitle each and every Amateur Radio operator living in a deed restricted community to erect an effective outdoor antenna. Full stop. That is the principal benefit of this legislation,” ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, stressed. “There are tens of thousands of ham radio licensees who now, absent the legislation, cannot erect any outdoor antenna at all. This enables them in the same way PRB-1 has enabled hams to address unreasonably restrictive zoning ordinances during the past 33 years.” Imlay points out, though, that certain conditions apply. Prior to erecting an antenna in a deed-restricted community, an applicant for an outdoor antenna may have to apply to the homeowners association (HOA) for prior approval of the particular antenna system proposed by the ham. The Act would *not* empower an HOA to deny approval of all outdoor antennas. But neither does it entitle radio Amateurs residing in deed-restricted subdivisions to erect whatever antennas they want.

“This legislation is a good solid balance that favors hams and, as I say, allows tens of thousands of hams to erect effective antennas that they have no right to erect now,” Imlay said.

The amendment, offered by the bipartisan trio and accepted by the House Armed Services Committee by voice vote, will ensure that Amateur Radio operators will continue to play a vital role in supporting communications in a disaster or emergency. Amateur Radio has long-standing relationships with the Department of Defense through the Military Auxiliary Radio Service (MARS) and spectrum sharing. The Armed Services Committee passed the NDAA by a 60-to-1 voice vote after a 14-hour markup that ran well into the night. The bill now awaits House floor action. The Senate will begin its markup of the NDAA during the week of May 21.

Representatives Courtney and Adam Kinzinger (R-IL/16) spearheaded the effort to include the Parity Act language in the NDAA. Both are cosponsors of the Parity Act, which has passed the House by voice vote twice in the past 2 years.

Recognizing the long-standing relationship between Amateur Radio and the Department of Defense, Congressman Kinzinger — who served multiple tours for the USAF as a fighter pilot and is still a Major in the Air National Guard, and Courtney have been champions of the legislation in Congress.

“The steadfast support of the Amateur Radio community continually demonstrated by Congressmen Kinzinger and Courtney has been a godsend,” said Hudson Director Mike Lisenco, N2YBB. “The Parity Act wouldn’t be anywhere close to this stage without their strong support, and our organization is extremely grateful.”

Lisenco, who serves as Chairman of the ARRL Board’s Legislative Advocacy Committee, also recognized other promoters of Amateur Radio, including House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Greg Walden, W7EQI (R-OR/2), Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Frank Pallone (D-NJ/6), and House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-TX/13). “We are deeply grateful for their continued understanding and support,” Lisenco said.

ARRL has pledged to continue pressing for support to enact the Amateur Radio Parity Act throughout the legislative process.

..... *ARRL News ... May 2018*



◊ The ham radio learning curve!

 14 May 2018 | by Mike VE3WDM |



It's true with Amateur radio there is a learning curve, depending on the background that you bring to the hobby the curve can be shallow or a very deep one. I don't shy away from the "curve" as it makes the hobby very interesting and a challenge. Because amateur radio is very deep no matter what there is always a learning curve for us all. This is a great because with most things once the interest and challenge is gone one tends to move on to something else. Funny thing about ham radio is your interest and challenge in the hobby can hit a downward swing BUT within the same hobby there are new challenges and interests.....such as the low solar cycle some may loose interest in certain HF activity but then gain a huge interest in something like FT8!

Here is a personal learning curve for me regarding this hobby....many times I have looked at the shack and said "there are some items here that I seem to be not using and are collecting dust" My thought is to convert those items into ham bucks by selling. Having said that here is my learning curve, there have been way to many times I have sold an item or two or three and then a short time later was in dyer need of said sold item. In some cases I have had to purchase once again the same item I sold. My learning curve or my take away is just hold onto it for a little bit longer as you may end up needing it again!

[Mike Weir, VE3WDM](#), is a regular contributor to AmateurRadio.com and writes from Ontario, Canada. Contact him at ve3wdm@hotmail.com.

Radio Contact Planned Between Cape Cod and Newfoundland During Marconi Daughter's Visit

During the planned visit of radio pioneer Guglielmo Marconi's daughter, Princess Elettra Marconi, to Cape Cod National Seashore on May 31, she has been invited to take part in a scheduled contact between KM1CC on the Cape and the Society of Newfoundland Radio Amateurs (SONRA) club in St John's Newfoundland. SONRA will use VO1AA.

"Chris Hillier, VO1IDX, will serve as the net controller, so a few SONRA members can call in to the Princess," KM1CC Trustee Barbara Dougan, N1NS, told ARRL. "Someone from KM1CC will stay on the air with VO1AA, should the Princess need to depart, then after, KM1CC can take calls from others should anyone want to make a contact with KM1CC in grid FN51."

It was at St John's that Marconi received the letter S from his station in Poldhu, Cornwall, in 1901. The plan is to use 14.224 MHz SSB on or around 1645 –1700 UTC, to accommodate schedule variations. —

Thanks to KM1CC Trustee Barbara Dougan, N1NS

..... ARRL News 5/17/2018



Marconi using his long distance radio cir. 1901.

UP – COMING ACTIVITIES AND HAMFESTS

05/18 – 19 - 20/2018 – Hamvention 2018 Green County Ohio Fairgrounds and Expo Center

05/19/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

06/09/2018 – WRTFD Strawberry Festival

06/16/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

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07/21/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

08/18/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

09/15/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

10/20/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

11/17/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

12/15/2018 – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.

Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

CLUB DUES FOR 2018

It is that time of year to pay your dues for the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club.

Your dues must be paid in full by June 1st in order to vote in the Fall MARC Officer Election.

The dues are still \$18.00 and they have remained that amount for many years. This also a good time to update any of your information for club records such as licence upgrade, change of address or call sign.

This is also a good opportunity for new amateurs to join our club and be part of our club activities.

**Please see Marlys Barr, KC9BHM
M.A.R.C. Treasurer**

MID-SATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month at the Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a *HAM* to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

WA9RDF Repeater:

146.835/
146.235 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

Club Officers:

President: Jacki Frederick – KI6QOG
Vice President: Ron Schuetz -K9THR
Secretary: Rhonda Curtis – WS9H
Treasurer: Marlys Barr – KD9BHM
Repeater Trustee - Chris Frederick – KQ9Y

WA9RDF Repeater:

443.525/
448.525 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and **ALL RADIO AMATEURS**
146.835/146.235 MHz (151.4 Hz PL Tone)

The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

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46131

Spark Gap Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU

Please send your articles to my email: n9siu@yahoo.com no later than the 3rd of the month



Special thanks to Johnson County REMC for the use of their community room for meetings and testing.